The Cry of the Oppreſſed

FOR

JUSTICE:

OR,

The CASE of *Thomas Rudd*,

Who was Impriſoned and Whipped through ſeveral Streets of the Town of *Leverpool*, in the County of *Lancaſter*, by the Order of the then *Mayor* of the ſaid Town, for going through the Streets thereof, and Exhorting the People to *Fear God*.

WITH

A Letter written by the ſaid *Thomas Rudd*, to *Thomas Sweeting*, Mayor of *Leverpool*.

LONDON,

Printed and Sold by *T. Sowle*, in *White-Hart-Court* in *Gracious-ſtreet*, and at the *Bible* in *Leaden-Hall-Street*, 1700.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE
CASE of Thomas Rudd.

WHEREAS *Thomas Rudd* of *Wharf*, near *Settle*, in *Yorkſhire*, by Trade a *Miller*, of a ſober Life, and orderly Converſation, one of the People called *Quakers*, had a Concern upon his Mind, in a Serious and Religious manner, to go through the Streets of *Leverpool* in *Lancaſhire*, to Warn the People to Fear and Dread the great God; was, by the *Mayor* of that Town, *Thomas Sweeting*, by Trade a Linnen-Draper, ſeveral times taken up, and committed to Priſon; and by other *Magiſtrates* of the ſame Town was ſent to the *Houſe of Correction*; and had his *Mare* taken from him, and ſold, and no part of the Money given or tender'd to him, but pretended part thereof to be expended for Charges, in carrying him to the *Houſe of Correction*, and the reſt to be given to the Poor.

And after this, being again concerned to go through the Streets of the ſame Town, was again taken up, and put in *Priſon*, by the aforeſaid *Mayor*'s Order, and kept above Two Weeks in *Priſon*; where *Thomas Roe*, Serjeant, that keeps the Priſon, would not ſuffer the Iron Door of the ſaid Priſon to be opened, to get a Bed in for him to lie upon, all the time, nor any other thing, but what could be got through the the Square Grates of the ſaid Door,

or Hole in the Wall; pretending the *Mayor*'s Order for the ſame.

And when other *Juſtices* Signed a Warrant for to ſend him from *Conſtable* to *Conſtable*, to his own home; Nevertheleſs, The ſaid *Mayor* cauſed *Thomas Rudd* to be Whipp'd (without the other *Juſtices* Knowledge, and contrary to their Order, as they ſaid) through ſome of the Streets of the ſaid Town of *Leverpool*; and called to the Man that whipp'd him, (*You* or *Thou Rogue*) Lay on, becauſe *Thomas* demanded Juſtice of him. Which *Cruelty*, how becoming it is for any pretending to be *Chriſtian Magiſtrates*, to execute upon any ſober Man, only for Exhorting People to Fear and Dread the great God, or Demanding Juſtice, we leave to the Truly *Chriſtian* to judge; and whether hereby theſe *Magiſtrates* have not acted contrary to the *Chriſtian Doctrine* of the Holy Apoſtle, who ſaith, *Rulers are not a Terror to Good Works, but to Evil: He is the Miniſter of God, a Revenger, to Execute Wrath upon him that doth Evil; not upon them that do Well, and Exhort to Fear God*; as King *Jehoſaphat* charged them that he ſet for Judgment, to Act in the Fear of the Lord.

And our preſent King *William*, in his late *Proclamation*, ſaith, *We do expect, that all Perſons of Honour or Authority ſhould contribute to the Diſcountenancing Men of Diſſolute and Debauched Lives*; and ſtrictly Charges and Commands all his *Mayors*, *Juſtices*, &c. to be *Vigilant* in Puniſhing all Perſons guilty of *Exceſſive Drinking*, *Profane Swearing*, &c. as they will anſwer it upon Pain of his Higheſt Diſpleaſure.

And

And the late Queen, in her Letter, complained of the *Neglect and Connivance of the Magiſtrates, in not putting in Execution thoſe Laws againſt Profane Swearing and Curſing, and all other Lewd and Erroneous Practices.*

And the Houſe of Commons, in their *Addreſs to the King*, deſires, That His *Majeſty would Effectually Diſcourage Profaneneſs; and that he would Iſſue out his Royal Proclamation, Commanding all Juſtices of the Peace, and other Magiſtrates, to put in ſpeedy Execution theſe Laws in Force againſt Profaneneſs and Immorality.*

But the *Mayor* of *Leverpool* hath Impriſoned, and cauſed a Man to be Whip'd, not for Profane Swearing, Curſing, or any Lewd or Erroneous Action, but for Exhorting People to Fear God, and telling them, the Lord would Puniſh, becauſe of Sin: Which the King, in his *Proclamation*, declares, *Nothing is likelier to Provoke God to withdraw his Mercy, and to Inflict Heavy and Severe Judgments upon this Kingdom, than the open and avowed Practice of Vice.*

And the Queen did Require, *That where any Officer of Juſtice ſhall be guilty of any of theſe Offences aforementioned, that ſuch Officer by his Puniſhment may ſerve for an Example to others.* But ſhe never directed, That Men, Fearing God, of Honeſt Lives, and Chriſtian Converſations, ſhould be Impriſoned and Whipped, for Exhorting People to Fear God, which is every Chriſtian's Duty.

But this *Mayor* of *Leverpool* hath cauſed a Man to be Impriſon'd and Whipp'd, for Exhorting People to Fear God. But how many he hath (in diſcharge of his Duty, purſuant to Law, and in Obedience to the King's Proclamation, and the Queen's

Letter,

Letter, and his own Oath) Profecuted for Swearing, Curſing, or any other Vice, or Lewd Diſorderly Practices, let the Inhabitants of that Town witneſs.

And how true he hath been to his Oath, and the other Juſtices of the Peace of *Leverpool*, have anſwered theirs, who are Sworn to keep, as well as cauſe to be kept, all Ordinances and Statutes, made for the good of the Peace; and to Chaſtize and Puniſh all Perſons in the ſaid County offending; but not to puniſh any contrary to Law, and for Exhorting People to Fear God.

And can any believe this is the way to carry on the *Reformation*, ſo Earneſtly Preſſed for by the *Church* of *England*, and by *Twenty Seven Lords*, *Seven Biſhops*, and *Seven Judges*, Eſpouſed by the City of *London*? Or to *Unite the Hearts of the King's Proteſtant Subjects in Intereſt and Affection*, thus to Treat a Man for Exhorting People to Fear God? How agreeable is this to his Oath, as Recited in Page 36. of the *Account* of the *Society* for *Reformation of Manners*, &c. *That he ſhall do Legal Right to the Poor, and to the Rich after his Cunning, Wit, and Power, and after the Laws and Cuſtoms of the Realm?* Which is not to puniſh any for Fearing God, or Exhorting thereunto; but thoſe that Curſe or Swear in Ale-Houſes, Taverns, Bowling-Greens, Coffee-Houſes, or other Pulick Places, as Markets, or Streets, or Fairs; and are Drunk, and found in Lewd, Debauched and Diſorderly Practices. And how many hath this *Mayor*, purſuant to his Oath, and in diſcharge of his Duty, Puniſhed for theſe Offences, as aforeſaid, let the Town of *Leverpool* witneſs for, or againſt him herein.

And

And this *Thomas Rudd* hath been concerned, in like manner, to go through the Streets of *London*, and met with no ſuch Treatment from any of the Magiſtrates there; and he hath alſo gone through the Streets of *Briſtol*, and met with no ſuch Treatment: The *Mayor* of that City did not diſcourage him in that Service. And ſurely there is great need of it in all the Cities, Towns and Villages of this Nation; for many, that have not this *Fear of God* before their Eyes, are too frequently found in many of the Evils afore-mentioned; which is not only to the Diſhonour of God, and Scandal of the Chriſtian Religion, but contracts Guilt upon the Souls of them that are found therein, and Provokes God to ſend Judgments upon this Nation, and the Inhabitants thereof: Which, it's our Earneſt Cry, and Fervent Prayer unto God, That he would Divert, if it be his Bleſſed Will, and Incline the Hearts of the People to Live in his Fear, that they may know him to Teach them, ſo that they may Live therein, and Enjoy his Bleſſing here, and Dye in his Favour, that they may be Eternally Happy hereafter.

Here follows a Letter from the ſaid *Thomas Rudd*, to the ſaid *Mayor*.

Thomas Sweeting,

AS *thou art* Mayor, *and Profeſſeth to be a* Chriſtian Magiſtrate, *I Deſire and Demand of thee my* Chriſtian Liberty, *to Clear my Conſcience in Obedience to God; and that I may have Juſtice done me, in what hath been wrongfully taken from me; and that thou may put a ſtop to Evil-doers in their Evil-doings. This laſt Night, in this very Houſe, they were Drinking, Fiddling, Dancing, Curſing and Swearing, and calling upon God to Damn them, not only till Midnight, but until Day-light: And if ſuch Evil-doers and Evil-doings be Tolerated, or ſuffered to go Free; and the Innocent, and ſuch as come in Obedience to God, to call to People to* Fear God, *made to Suffer, will not God Judge for ſuch things?*

From thy Friend, and all Peoples,

In Sincerity and Truth,

Leverpool-Priſon, the 6th of the 4th Month, 1699. *Thomas Rudd.*

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THE END.